

_____ JOINT RESOLUTION NO. _____

INTRODUCED BY _____

(Primary Sponsor)

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA TO STUDY THE BARRIERS TO RETIRED OR PART-TIME HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS VOLUNTEERING THEIR SERVICES TO QUALIFIED HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS THAT SERVE UNINSURED, LOW-INCOME, AND UNDERSERVED MONTANANS.

WHEREAS, adequate health care services should be available to all Montanans; however, poverty, low income levels, and lack of health insurance preclude many Montanans from having access to adequate health care; and

WHEREAS, the lack of access precludes many patients from timely medical assistance, which can have the effect of aggravating and magnifying conditions to be more acute, complicated, and expensive; and

WHEREAS, the lack of access often forces patients to seek services in emergency rooms, which is more expensive and an inefficient use of resources; and

WHEREAS, there is a reserve of retired and part-time health care practitioners in Montana who may be willing to volunteer their services to provide quality health care to assist in meeting these needs, except that barriers exist that discourage the volunteering of these resources, such as the expense and limited availability of medical malpractice insurance for volunteers; and

WHEREAS, methods to limit medical malpractice liability exposure of health care providers who volunteer their services need to be explored; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the people of Montana to encourage and enable health care providers to volunteer their time and talents to the care of Montanans who are in need of health care.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to investigate how to best promote and remove barriers for qualified health care providers to volunteer their services to meet the health care needs of low-income and uninsured Montanans, including how to limit medical malpractice exposure.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any study involve participation of licensed health care providers,
2 state, county, and tribal health departments, advocates, groups involved in trying to meet the health care needs
3 of uninsured Montanans, the legal community, and the insurance industry.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be
5 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
7 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2006.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
9 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 60th Legislature.

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